MARVEL
2
THE INITIATIVE
THE ORDER
DIRECT EDITION
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In the aftermath of the civil war that pitted hero against hero, Iron Man envisioned a new world order -- one of responsibility and supervision, where super heroes are federally registered and held accountable to the people they protect. As Tony Stark, the new director of the peacekeeping agency S.H.I.E.L.D., he personally took charge, creating the 50-State Initiative: A program placing highly trained super hero teams in each state of the nation. The Order is the first such team. Based in California, it is the crown jewel of the Initiative.

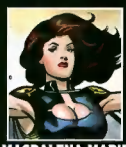
Outstanding Americans carefully recruited from a corps of volunteers, the members of the Order have one thing in common: They were all heroes in the "real" world, in real ways both great and small. Rigorously trained in their astonishing new powers, the team is backed by the finest public relations and marketing that money can buy.

WELCOME TO THE ORDER

TONY STARK
IRON MAN

PEPPER POTTS
HERA

HENRY HELLRUNG
ANTHEM



MAGDALENA MARIE
VEDA

DENNIS MURRAY
HEAVY

MULHOLLAND BLACK
MULHOLLAND

JAMES WA
CALAMITY

BECKY RYAN
ARALUNE

MILO FIELDS
SUPERNAUT

Membership in the Order can't be taken for granted, as the original roster learned the hard way. After their first victory, against an out-of-control living weapon they dubbed Infernal Man, team leaders Hera and Anthem discharged four team members for drinking and partying in celebration -- a clear violation of their contract's morality and ethics clauses. Membership in the Order has to be earned and maintained -- break the rules, underperform, or thoughtlessly endanger the public welfare and you're out.

The genetic-enhancement super-powers that come with the job only last about a year before they start destroying the human body. Our team's time in the spotlight is all too brief…so they must make every moment count.

Trouble has already begun for the team's new starting lineup: They were barely breaking in their new powers during a training exercise attended by the Los Angeles press, when they were attacked by a mysterious -- and strange -- squadron of antiquated Soviet super-villains from the Cold War.

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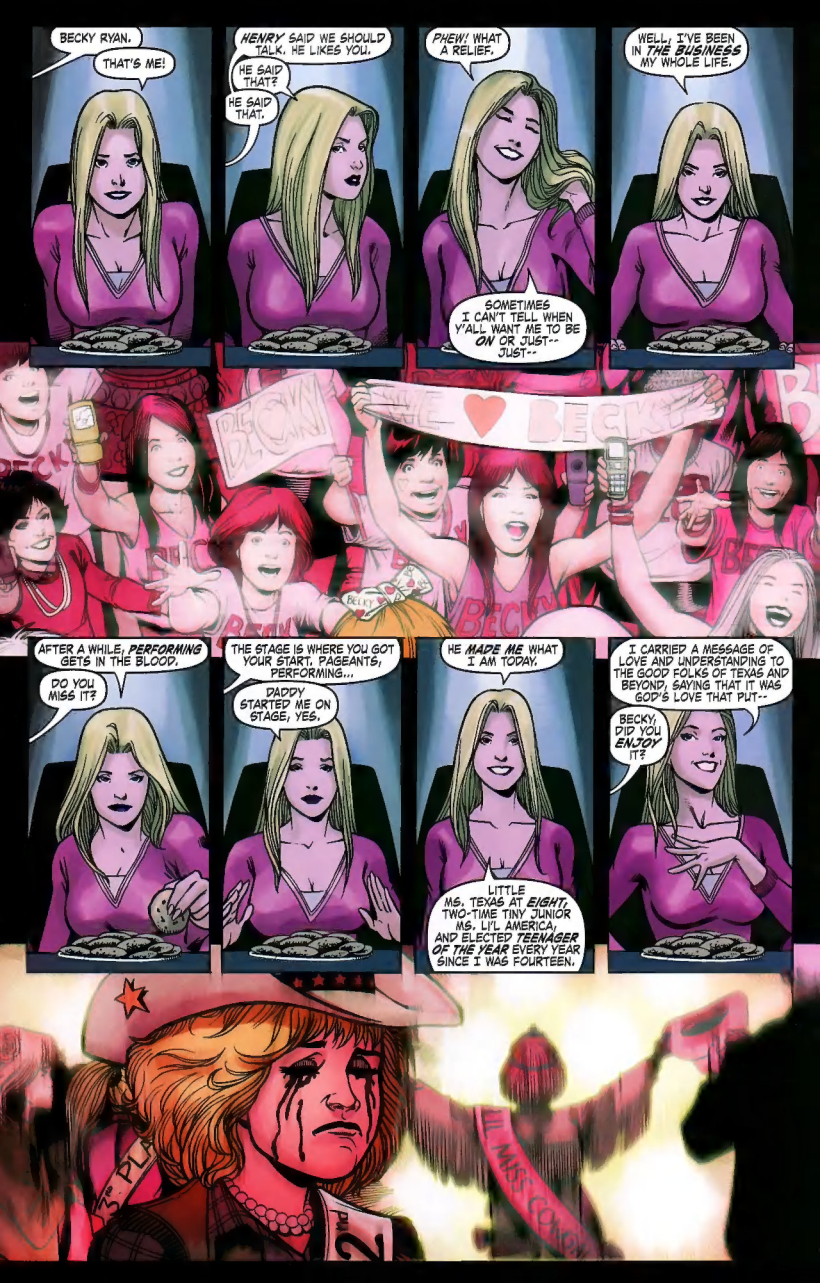
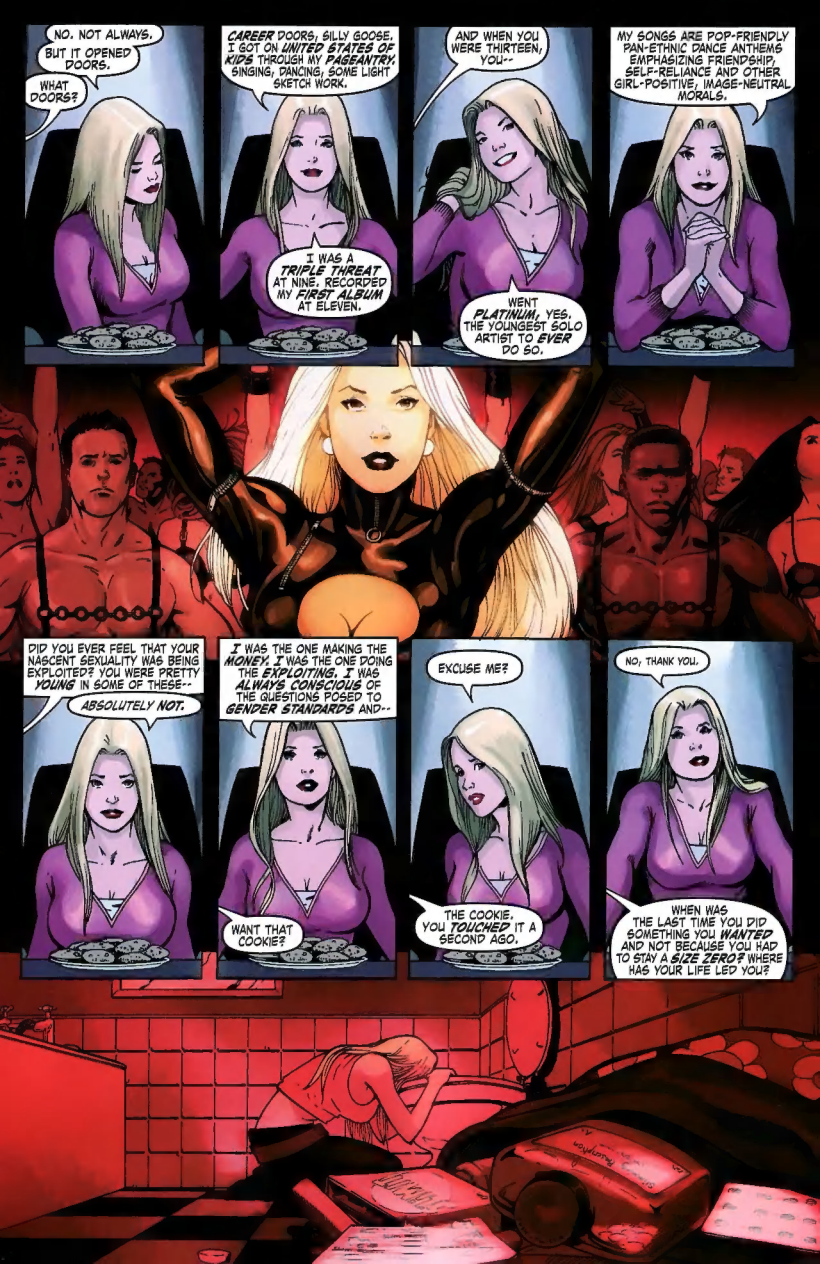
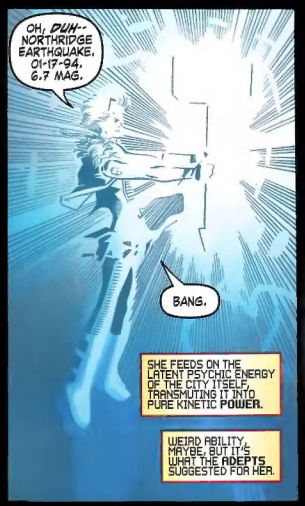
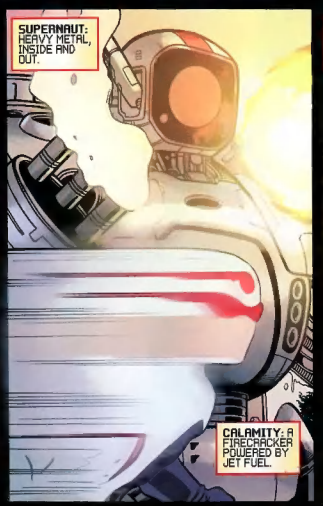

BECKY RYAN.
THAT'S ME!
HENRY SAID WE SHOULD TALK. HE LIKES YOU.
HE SAID THAT?
HE SAID THAT.
PHEW! WHAT A RELIEF.
SOMETIMES I CAN'T TELL WHEN Y'ALL WANT ME TO BE ON OR JUST-- JUST--
WELL, I'VE BEEN IN THE BUSINESS MY WHOLE LIFE.
AFTER A WHILE, PERFORMING GETS IN THE BLOOD.
DO YOU MISS IT?
THE STAGE IS WHERE YOU GOT YOUR START. PAGEANTS, PERFORMING...
DADDY STARTED ME ON STAGE, YES.
HE MADE ME WHAT I AM TODAY.
LITTLE MS. TEXAS AT EIGHT, TWO-TIME TINY JUNIOR MS. LI'L AMERICA, AND ELECTED TEENAGER OF THE YEAR EVERY YEAR SINCE I WAS FOURTEEN.
I CARRIED A MESSAGE OF LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING TO THE GOOD FOLKS OF TEXAS AND BEYOND, SAYING THAT IT WAS GOD'S LOVE THAT PUT--
BECKY, DID YOU ENJOY IT?


NO. NOT ALWAYS.
BUT IT OPENED DOORS.
WHAT DOORS?
CAREER DOORS, SILLY GOOSE. I GOT ON UNITED STATES OF KIDS THROUGH MY PAGEANTRY, SINGING, DANCING, SOME LIGHT SKETCH WORK.
I WAS A TRIPLE THREAT AT NINE, RECORDED MY FIRST ALBUM AT ELEVEN.
AND WHEN YOU WERE THIRTEEN, YOU--
WENT PLATINUM, YES, THE YOUNGEST SOLO ARTIST TO EVER DO SO.
MY SONGS ARE POP-FRIENDLY PAN-ETHNIC DANCE ANTHEMS EMPHASIZING FRIENDSHIP, SELF-RELIANCE AND OTHER GIRL-POSITIVE, IMAGE-NEUTRAL MORALS.
DID YOU EVER FEEL THAT YOUR NASCENT SEXUALITY WAS BEING EXPLOITED? YOU WERE PRETTY YOUNG IN SOME OF THESE--
ABSOLUTELY NOT.
I WAS THE ONE MAKING THE MONEY. I WAS THE ONE DOING THE EXPLOITING. I WAS ALWAYS CONSCIOUS OF THE QUESTIONS POSED TO GENDER STANDARDS AND--
WANT THAT COOKIE?
EXCUSE ME?
THE COOKIE. YOU TOUCHED IT A SECOND AGO.
NO, THANK YOU.
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID SOMETHING YOU WANTED AND NOT BECAUSE YOU HAD TO STAY A SIZE ZERO? WHERE HAS YOUR LIFE LED YOU?

SERIOUSLY, Y'ALL, I'M PUNCHIN' A BEAR IN THE FACE!
WHAT THE HAY IS GOING ON?
"Fame is the thirst of youth."--Lord Byron
"...HAY?"
DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, GUYS, BUT IT'S A LITTLE EMBARRASSING TO WATCH THE TEENYBOPPER FIGHT THE INSANE RUSSIANS ALONE.
ANYBODY ELSE WANNA SAVE THE WORLD?
"Fame is no sanctuary from the passing of youth...suicide is much easier and more acceptable in Hollywood than growing old gracefully." --Julie Burchill
УВЕЙТЕ ИХ.
ГОЛОВНЫЕ ТОЛЬКО.
"Whether you like it or not, history is on our side. We will bury you." --Nikita Khrushchev

HERA FIELD LOG:
MISSION DAY INTENDING
IT TAKES THEM A SECOND TO REALIZE IT'S ALL REALLY HAPPENING.
MULHOLLAND BLACK FREEZES, PANIC CUTTING HER OFF FROM THE SOURCE OF HER POWER--
THINK, MULHOLLAND, C'MON--THINK L.A.--
--LOS ANGELES ITSELF.
MULHOLLAND! KEEP IT SIMPLE!
EARTHQUAKE!
AND JUST WHEN I WONDERED IF SHE'D PULL OUT OF IT, HEAVY COACHES HER ALONG...


OH, PUH--NORTHRIDGE EARTHQUAKE, 01-17-94, 6.7 MAG.
BANG.
SHE FEEDS ON THE LATENT PSYCHIC ENERGY OF THE CITY ITSELF, TRANSMUTING IT INTO PURE KINETIC POWER.
WEIRD ABILITY, MAYBE, BUT IT'S WHAT THE ADEPTS SUGGESTED FOR HER.


SUPERNAUT: HEAVY METAL, INSIDE AND OUT.
CALAMITY: A FIRECRACKER POWERED BY JET FUEL.

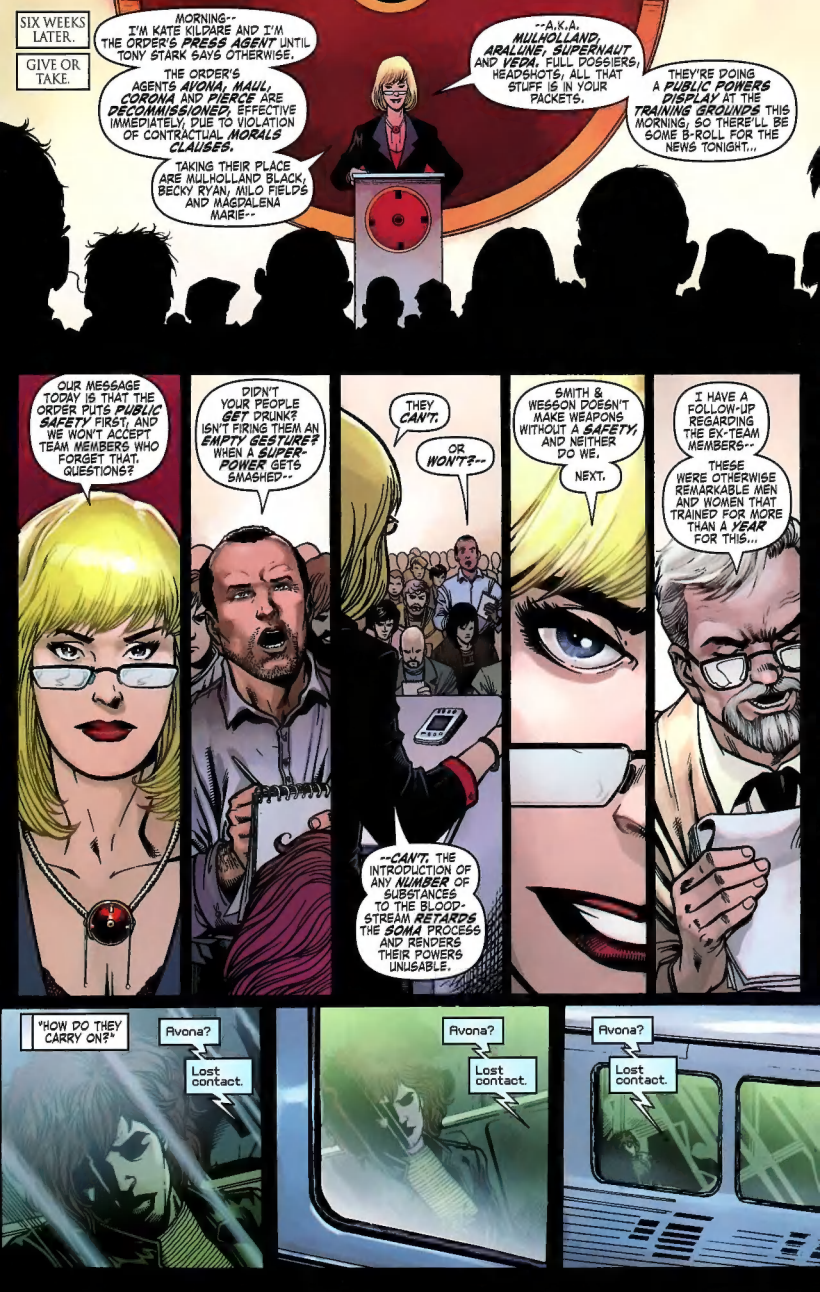
VEDA, SPAWNING GOLEMS OUT OF WHAT SURROUNDS HER--QUITE LITERALLY OUR EARTH MOTHER.

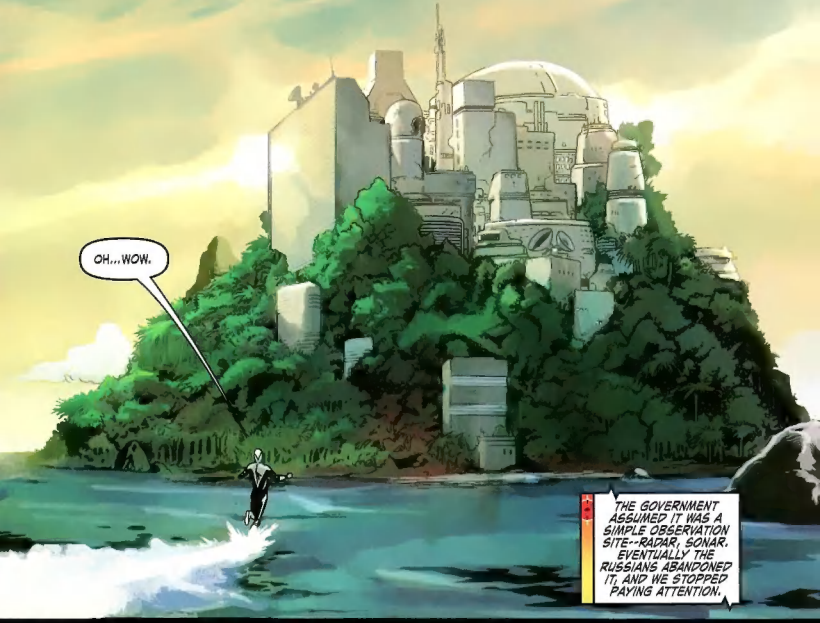
ANTHEM AND HEAVY.
A LIVING SUPERCELL THUNDERSTORM AND THE TEAM'S COMBAT COACH...
MULHOLLAND OKAY?
SHE WILL BE.

AND BECKY RYAN. AARLUNE.
THE LITTLE GIRL WHO CAN BECOME WHATEVER SHE WANTS TO BE...
HAH. THIS WARSKIN IS GOOOOD.

BECK SQUISH.
MATE!
JETPACK BEAR IS DOWN, Y'ALL.
COME ON, BABIES, COME ON--
VEDA! WATCH YOUR SIX--
CMA60.
CALAMITY, LITTLE HELP??
NYET! BAD RUSSIAN!
NYET, NYET!
IN SOVIET RUSSIA, CRAZY RUSSIAN ROBOT LADY THROWS YOU!
WHATTACOUNNNTRY.
MERA FIELD LOG: MISSION 002 RECORDING
AND THEN I COME IN WITH THE BAD NEWS...
ALL RIGHT, GANG--I'VE BEEN MAINLINING THE STARK DATASPINE AND THIS IS MY BEST PARSING OF THE SITUATION:
THEY'RE VERY ANGRY, VERY RUSSIAN AND VERY OLD. COLD-WAR OLD.

THESE GUYS HAVE BEEN ON ICE SINCE-- I DUNNO--THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS? JUST WAITING FOR A NUCLEAR WAKE-UP CALL--THEY'RE THE ALPHA GEN SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS.
THEY'RE A DOOMSDAY CLEANUP CREW-- AND THEY THINK IT'S TIME TO RAMPAGE NOW THAT THEY'VE DETECTED A NUCLEAR STRIKE ON AMERICAN SOIL.
INFERNO MAN.
INFERNAL.
THE REDS PICKED UP INFERNAL MAN'S HEAT DISCHARGE YESTERDAY--RIGHT?
BINGO.
ALL RIGHT, TEAM--IF YOU'RE NOT PLAYING IN AN END-OF-THE-WORLD HEADSPACE...
...GET THERE QUICK. THESE GOONS ARE KHRUSHCHEV'S OWN ARMAGEDDON CLEANUP CREW.
GARGOYLE WILL BE THE ONE WITH THE EYEBROWS.
РАЙ ЖАГТ!
MONGU--THIS HAS TO BE A TRANSLATION ERROR--"A MAN INSIDE OF ROBOT-SUIT THAT LOOKS LIKE A BIGGER MAN"? --THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
AND CRIMSON DYNAMO--HE'S LIKE SUPERNAUT'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER. THERE'S A GUY INSIDE THERE, TOO, SO BE CAREFUL.
OH MY GOD.
GUYS-- S.H.I.E.L.D. INTEL SAYS THEY'RE NUCLEAR-POWERED.
MAYBE ALL THE SHOOTING AND PUNCHING WAS A BAD IDEA THEN.
GIVE THE EVACUATION ALERT, PEPPER. WE'RE IN TROUBLE.


SIX WEEKS LATER.
GIVE OR TAKE.
MORNING-- I'M KATE KILDARE AND I'M THE ORDER'S PRESS AGENT UNTIL TONY STARK SAYS OTHERWISE.
THE ORDER'S AGENTS AVONA, MAUL, CORONA AND PIERCE ARE DECOMMISSIONED, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, DUE TO VIOLATION OF CONTRACTUAL MORALS CLAUSES.
TAKING THEIR PLACE ARE MULHOLLAND BLACK, BECKY RYAN, MILO FIELDS AND MAGDALENA MARIE--
--A.K.A. MULHOLLAND, ARALUNE, SUPERNAUT AND VEDA. FULL DOSSIERS, HEADSHOTS, ALL THAT STUFF IS IN YOUR PACKETS.
THEY'RE DOING A PUBLIC POWERS DISPLAY AT THE TRAINING GROUNDS THIS MORNING, SO THERE'LL BE SOME B-ROLL FOR THE NEWS TONIGHT...
OUR MESSAGE TODAY IS THAT THE ORDER PUTS PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST, AND WE WON'T ACCEPT TEAM MEMBERS WHO FORGET THAT. QUESTIONS?
DIDN'T YOUR PEOPLE GET DRUNK? ISN'T FIRING THEM AN EMPTY GESTURE? WHEN A SUPER-POWER GETS SMASHED--
THEY CAN'T.
OR WON'T?--
--CAN'T. THE INTRODUCTION OF ANY NUMBER OF SUBSTANCES TO THE BLOOD-STREAM RETARDS THE SOMA PROCESS AND RENDERS THEIR POWERS UNUSABLE.
SMITH & WESSON DOESN'T MAKE WEAPONS WITHOUT A SAFETY, AND NEITHER DO WE.
NEXT.
I HAVE A FOLLOW-UP REGARDING THE EX-TEAM MEMBERS--
THESE WERE OTHERWISE REMARKABLE MEN AND WOMEN THAT TRAINED FOR MORE THAN A YEAR FOR THIS...
"HOW DO THEY CARRY ON?"
Avona?
Lost contact.
Avona?
Lost contact.
Avona?
Lost contact.


OH...WOW.
THE GOVERNMENT ASSUMED IT WAS A SIMPLE OBSERVATION SITE--RADAR, SONAR. EVENTUALLY THE RUSSIANS ABANDONED IT, AND WE STOPPED PAYING ATTENTION.

BECAUSE WE THOUGHT THEY HAD JUST PLANTED MICROPHONES THERE AND LEFT.
BUT THEY HAD PLANTED BOMBS...

AM I WALKING AROUND ON A BIG GIANT BOMB?
NOT QUITE.
GOOD, OKAY.
THE GUYS YOU'RE FIGHTING--ONE OF THEM IS THE BOMB. YOU'RE WALKING AROUND ON THE REMOTE CONTROL.

THEY WERE SET TO GO OFF DECADES AGO.
AND I BELIEVE THEY'RE BEING CONTROLLED BY PEOPLE STILL ON THE ISLAND--SO BE CAREFUL.
WHO COULD'VE SURVIVED HERE ALONE FOR DECADES? AND HOW?

GENTLE JEEBUS.

MIKE WIERINGO
June 24, 1963 - August 12, 2007

DCP

TEAM SCAN

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